



## “Back me up”

Peer pressure lesson plan

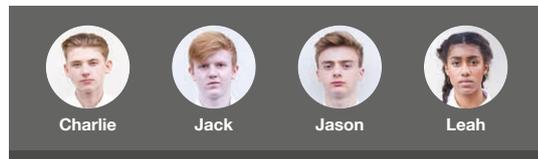
Definition of peer pressure:

The Cambridge Dictionary defines ‘peer pressure’ as the strong influence of a group, especially of children, on members of that group to behave as someone else does.

Synopsis of film 3: “Back me up”  
Running time: 4+ mins



Although it is unclear why, this film starts with Jack being called to speak with the Head of Pastoral Care. Seen through a series of flashbacks, it becomes obvious that he may be implicated in hurtful online behaviour against someone in school. Although Jack is uncomfortable, his friend, Charlie, puts pressure on him to join in the cyberbullying, saying ‘it’s just a joke’. Charlie sets up an anonymous ‘secrets of the school’ site where he and his friends post gossip and mean comments about others. Charlie, worried that the school is now aware of what has happened, asks Jack to ‘back him up’ so that he doesn’t get into trouble. We also see the friends of the cyberbullying target, Jason, speak about how best to support him. Some would like to stand up for him whereas others feel pressure to say nothing.



Charlie

Jack

Jason

Leah

**Key issues:** bystanders, peer pressure, what is a good friend?

### ? What is peer pressure?

How does peer pressure happen/ start? Do you have any examples?

- **Insults:** making a person feel bad for not doing something, so they eventually will
- **Reasoning:** giving lots of reasons why you should do something
- **Rejection:** being left out if you don’t do something
- **Unspoken pressure:** simply seeing your friends wearing something or doing something makes you want to join them

### ? How peer pressure manifests itself online:

A hurtful comment is being retweeted and shared about someone in your year group. Everyone is liking it, commenting and passing it on. Some people think it is just funny, but you know it’s wrong but you don’t want to be left out or have people turn on you.

All your friends have hundreds of followers on their social networking sites and often get well over a hundred likes on their selfies. You only have around 30 friends online and don’t like the idea of connecting with people you don’t know. However, everyone keeps teasing you and saying you have no friends.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines a **bystander** as a person who is standing near and watching something that is happening but is not taking part.

A bystander online could be defined as someone who, for example, sees bullying happening online but who says nothing and who doesn’t report to an adult. We want to encourage young people to be **upstanders**, instead of bystanders online. Upstanders are people who look out for others online. In situations of bullying, they might report offensive posts on behalf of the target, or they might send the person being cyberbullied a short message to say they are not alone.

“Peer groups are important – you can stick up for your friends anonymously (reporting possibly), whether it be online or just defend them in front of others – call it out”

**Young person, Childnet focus group**

